MUSEUM ON MAIN STREET

IMPRESSIONS

WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER • MARCH 2002

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Published Seven Times A Year From September-May.
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Annual dues are individual, $15; couple/family $25; student or senior (60+) $10; senior couple $19; business/association $50; patron $100.

Upcoming Exhibits

President **Pauline Walters** and Collections Chair **Judy Chrisman** are already hard at work preparing our next exhibits. From mid-April until the end of June, MoMs will be displaying wedding dresses and other paraphernalia associated with weddings. It might surprise you to learn that the white wedding dress is a fairly recent custom: we have 19th c. dresses in brown and black! We have just received several dresses from Janet Ferguson which belonged to her family, the Sunderlands, whose minister built the Unitarian Church in Ann Arbor (now the offices of architects Hobbs & Black). They are still looking for more, so if you would like to LOAN us wedding artifacts, call 734-662-9092.

The next exhibit will focus on all the families who have resided in our building. MoMs was moved from 1015 Wall Street in 1990, and housed the Kellogg, Ruthruff, Grenier and Marz families. If you have any items relating to these families, please contact us! This exhibit will be mounted from mid-July until the end of September.

Your Museum

We like it that our members read our newsletter and respond so quickly to our pleas for items. Thank you **Art Gallagher** for the cotton sheets and **Paul Olson** for buying us a new ladder! We appreciate your help.

The **Bach Bequest Committee** has drawn up a list of guidelines for investment and will be sending requests for proposals to eight local banks and investment firms. We hope we can soon announce that the large bequest from **Doris Anna Bach** is safely invested and that we can use the proceeds for much needed items for the museum. The antiques we received from the Bach Estate have been appraised and some are being accessioned into our collections. **Gary Kuehnle** is selling other items on consignment at his shop, **The Chelsea Collection.** Unwanted items were donated to the **Fairy Godmother Group. Pauline Walters, Patty Creal, Judy Chrisman** have worked for months to sort through all these items and decide how to manage them. They should get the gold medal in the "Antique Olympics!"

Continued on page 8.

Photo by Susan Wineberg

Agnes Dikeman and visitors at the Saline Exhibit at MOMS.

Photo by Susan Wineberg

Bob Harrison and Dean Greb of Saline taking apart a pipe threader used by plumbers. It was given to the Saline Society by our own Ann DeFreytas and came from her family's farm in Northfield Township.

April Program

Mark you calendars
for **Sunday, April 21**
when **Rachel Szymanski**
will give a lecture and on
Katherine McCormick Dexter,
granddaughter of Samuel Dexter,
who founded the village of Dexter.

St. Joseph Catholic Church
3450 Dover • Dexter, MI.

BY JAMES T. MAYS • PARADE MARSHALL

The Story Of The Buffalo Soldiers

The sanctuary of the Bethel AME Church on John A. Woods Drive was the setting for our program on Sunday, February 17 honoring Black History Month. Over 50 people heard ***Jim Mays,*** *assisted by WCHS Board Member* ***Karen Simpson, LuVern Mayweather, Joe Sims*** *and* ***John Collins****—dressed in period costumes from the mid-19th century—discuss the history of the Buffalo Soldiers. They are members of* ***The Washtenaw County Buffalo Soldiers,*** *a group of about 20 people organized in 1992. This group meets on the 4th Saturday of every month at the Community Church of God in Ypsilanti at 9:30. All are welcome to join. Learn more about this group by visiting their website at* ***www.wcbs.org.*** *or call* ***Jim Mays at 734-662-9425.***

Photo by Susan Wineberg

The Washtenaw County Buffalo Soldiers: John Collins, Joe Sims, Karen Simpson, LuVern Mayweather and Jim Mays.

"Thank you for having us today. It is our desire today to tell you some of **OUR** story: you've heard **HIStory** which from our standpoint has not always been accurate. We're going to try to remedy that and tell the story of our blacks in the military from roughly 1866-1946. This corresponds to the period just after the Civil War to the date when President Truman integrated the armed services. [At this point Mr. Mays began a Power Point slide presentation and also introduced Karen Simpson, dressed as a pioneer woman from *ca.* 1870 who accompanied their husbands or fiancées by wagon train to the Indian territories of the West. Karen talked a little about her outfit and about black women who went West after the Civil War].

"From St. Louis to the California coast and from Mexico to Canada, the U.S. West was ripe for settlement after the Civil War and particularly after the Transcontinental Railroad was finished in 1869. This was where the Buffalo Soldiers, the black cavalry, were on patrol. In July of 1866 Congress allowed black men—for the first time in US history— to serve in the Army when the country was NOT at war. This was a very humane thing. Blacks had always served in the armed forces during time of war and it is estimated that over 180,000 blacks had served in the Civil War. Over 35,000 blacks had given their lives fighting for the Union and an untold amount died for the South. After the war, with all of the devastation in the South, the newly freed slaves were allowed to earn large sums of money—$13/month—to be in the armed forces. And they joined up by the thousands! It was a great time, a time of hope for a better life away from the threat of starvation as a sharecropper.

"A monument to the Buffalo Soldier was unveiled in 1992 in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and was also depicted on a US postal stamp that year. In fact, our current Secretary of State, Colin Powell, was responsible for having that statue erected. He organized the Buffalo Soldier Project in 1982. [Mays had to shed some of his gear and his wool jacket at this point and he pointed out how warm such a uniform would have been. He also talked about the history of the Washtenaw County Buffalo Soldiers and introduced the others, including LuVern Mayweather, the current President].

"My slides will show pictures of some of the famous Buffalo Soldiers. Many men joined from Michigan, and there were already two groups established—the 9th and the 10th Cavalry. Shortly thereafter they organized the 24th and the 25th Infantry. The 9th was under the leadership of Edward Hatch and the 10th was under Col. Benjamin Grierson. The 10th began in Leavenworth and the 9th began outside New Orleans, LA. Those were the only two black cavalry units. The two infantry units, the 24th and 25th, actually lasted through the Korean War even though the Army had been desegregated in 1947 by President Truman. Congress claimed that since they had established the units, the President could not desegregate them and it took quite a while the make that happen. The 9th and the 10th Cavalry had already been dissolved because after the Second World War the need for horsemanship had all but disappeared. In fact, the 10th Cavalry is now the 10th Tank Division, and members of the 10th Tank still carry the Buffalo crest on their uniforms.

"Where did the name Buffalo Soldier came from? We know that the Plains Indians named them out of respect for their bravery in battle. The skin and hair of blacks reminded the Indians of the feared and admired buffalo which they hunted for food and clothing. The troopers accepted the name and wore it proudly, since to be associated with the fighting spirit of the sacred buffalo was a measure of respect.

What did the soldiers do? They served on the frontier from Montana to Texas, along the Rio Grande in New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado and the Dakotas. They built forts and roads, strung telegraph lines, protected railroad crews, escorted stages and trains, protected settlers and cattle drives and fought Cheyenne, Arapahoe, Kiowa, Comanche and Apache warriors.

"I'd like to start telling you about some of the heroes of the Buffalo Soldiers. First is **Emanuel Stance** born in Charleston, South Carolina. He was 19 in 1866 and he decided he could help his family more by joining the Army. Somehow, Emanuel Stance, who stood about 5'2" and weighed

about 119 pounds, made it from Charleston to New Orleans to enlist in the 9th Cavalry. Now that was not an easy feat in 1866. There were no trains or buses, and United Airlines did not fly that direction. Emanuel made it somehow, despite never having worn a pair of shoes. He made it because he had that intestinal fortitude that said, "I can do better." He became a good soldier and four years later received the Congressional Medal of Honor for his bravery and his shooting ability. He almost single handedly recaptured two young white girls who had been taken from a wagon train by the Indians near Kickapoo Springs, Texas in May of 1870. He was the first black man ever to receive a Congressional Medal of Honor. This was a great feat because his white commanding officer hated his guts!

"The second person is someone I am beginning to love a lot. His name was **Isaiah Mays** and it turns out he is my great-great uncle—someone I knew nothing about until I became active with the Buffalo Soldiers six years ago! This young man also received a Congressional Medal of Honor. You will notice a star on his label—it is this Medal of Honor. He is wearing a suit to go back to Clayton, Alabama after his service in the Army to again work on the farm and help his aged father, my great-great-grandfather! He had thwarted a robbery of the Fort Thomas' payroll in 1889 and his bravery and heroism in going to get help despite wounds in both legs led to his being given the Medal.

"Back in the 1870s, women could not be in the armed forces. However, LuVern Mayweather talked about **Cathay Williams,** a woman Buffalo Soldier (38th Infantry, Company A) born a slave near Independence, Missouri who decided to pose as a man to enter the Army. Her father was a free black, but the master would not grant freedom to her mother. Cathay enlisted at the age of 24 as William Cathay after aiding soldiers throughout the Civil War as a cook and laundress. She was later quoted about her enlistment as a man: 'I wanted to make my own living and not be dependent on relatives or friends.' Her comrades didn't know she was a woman. Mayweather referred to a book by Philip Thomas Tucker entitled **From Slave to Female Buffalo Soldier.** She served in the 28th from 1866-68 at Fort Cummings, New Mexico, but her identity as a woman was revealed after she was wounded and she was dismissed in 1868. Cathay Williams is a role model for women and soldiers and for people desiring independence.

"Another hero of the Buffalo soldiers is **Henry O. Flipper,** who was the first black officer in the Army having gone to West Point for four years. His parents had been slaves in Georgia. His father was an excellent leather worker and could make shoes and repair harnesses and he had received so many tips over the years that he was able to purchase his wife and young son, Henry, from another slaveholder who was a Methodist minister. They were still slaves, but now in Atlanta, and had a kindly owner who allowed the slave children to learn to read and write. After the Civil War, when the AMA (American Missionary Association) sent northern teachers down South to teach the newly freed slaves, Henry had a step up on all the other children. He became a great student and graduated from Atlanta High School and went on to Atlanta College. From there he went to West Point on a scholarship. He became one of the very few blacks to have attended West Point. In fact, he became the **first** black man to **graduate** from West Point, and therefore the **first black officer**. He became a 2nd Lt. in the 10th Cavalry and he served at Fort Leavenworth, Fort Sill and others. He is known to have ridden over 90 miles in a day and a half to protect his army brothers. He was also a great horseman and sharp young man and very handsome. His great horsemanship was his undoing, however, since he was asked to ride with the niece of the general of the fort. Only a few months later he was discharged because of 'conduct unbecoming an officer.' He was used as an example of how black men could not be good soldiers! Despite all this, Flipper went on to become an engineer and writer of books about the Southwest. He died in Georgia around 1940 and about 3 ½ years ago President Clinton reversed his court martial.

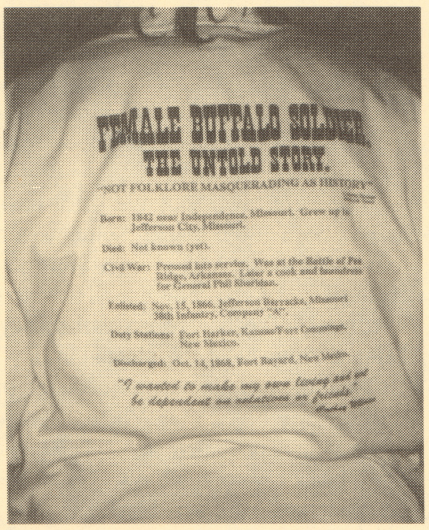


Photo by Susan Wineberg

This T-shirt tells the story of Cathay Williams, a woman who enlisted as a man.

"This photo from 1943 is of one of the last black officers of the Buffalo Soldiers. He is seen here on a horse and was in Los Angeles where he was arrested, also for 'conduct unbecoming an officer' because he was carousing with a white woman. This woman was in the courtroom during his court martial and the prosecuting attorney asked that she stand. As she rose from her seat an older black man helped her rise. That caused some consternation in the courtroom, and the man assured people that it was OK because she was his daughter. She was not white, but was a light-complected black! The court martial was stopped at that point. Who was this black officer? He went on to become a great American. He did not stop because they tried to make life hard for him. He went on to become the first black man ever to play baseball in the major leagues. This was **Jackie Robinson.** There are a million more stories like these in the military, but in the past were always told a slanted version.

"I'd like to sum up the achievements of the Buffalo Soldiers. There were 18 blacks that received the Congressional Medal of Honor from 1866-1890. In that period there were some 130 (I may be wrong about this number) medals given out. So blacks received more than 10% of all the Medals awarded and most have been well above average and were the world's greatest soldiers. Look at the enlistment rate, the desertion rate, the AWOL rate, and you'll see the experiment proved that the black man could become a great soldier. The only unfortunate result of their military service (which we know of from black men who have written diaries) was their sadness at helping take away the freedom from the Indians. As newly freed from slavery themselves, they felt a special pang at reducing the freedom of other oppressed peoples.

"We have a few more people in the West we'd like to discuss. There was a movie entitled ***Tomahawk*** in 1951 with a man named **Jim Beckworth** played by an actor. I saw this movie when I was a kid and I discovered recently that he looked a little different from the actor. The real Jim Beckworth grew up in St. Louis, went out West, and he was black! In fact, if you were to travel west from Reno, Nevada into California, you'd be going through Beckworth Pass and he's the guy who discovered it! Jim Beckworth was a very strong, dominating person and the Indians called him Chief Bloody Arm because of his fighting exploits.

"The next person we'll discuss is a scoundrel, and yes, there were black scoundrels in the West in that era, just like there are black scoundrels here in Ann Arbor today. But **Ben Hodges** is a colorful scoundrel. Ben got away with many things, usually by pretending to be dumb. He often would steal people's goods, sell them back to them, and escape before the duplicity was discovered!

"Here is one of the best cowboys of the era—**Nat Love (Deadwood Dick)** who would be the Michael Jordan of cowboys if he lived today. He reigned all over the west, and there's a town in the Dakota Territory called Deadwood (now South Dakota) that was named after him because he could outshoot, outride, outrope everybody around. After he was too old to be punching cows he got a "good job" as a Pullman porter. And that's the difference 100 years makes. The best men in those days, to get a good job, had to wait on others and fetch and carry for them. Today, a Michael Jordan would not have to do something like that! So, there has been improvement.

"Some blacks formed gangs, one of which was the **Rufus Buck Gang.** They were often people of mixed race (black, white, Indian) and they were mean and vengeful. The photo shown on the screen is of the group before their execution.

"The last bad guy we'll talk about is a man named **Cherokee Bill.** He only lived to be 20, but at the age of 17 he started stealing and he shot more people than Billy the Kid.

"Now to the good folk. **Bass Reaves** had two stints in the Army and then became a Marshall. He was said to be illiterate. But he was one of the best

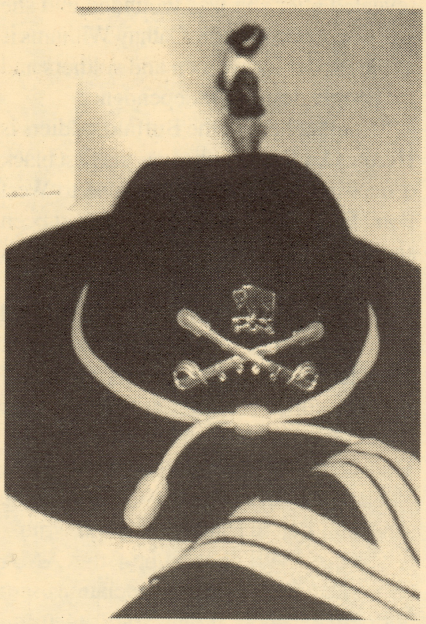


Photo by Susan Wineberg

Hat worn by the Buffalo Soldiers with the buffalo insignia.

marshalls around and always treated people humanely. He worked for Judge Harker, the "Hanging Judge." Bass went all over the Southwest and was a noted lawman. Another colorful character was **Mary Fields (Stagecoach Mary),** a big, tough woman who started a laundry and was so powerful she was allowed into saloons. No one messed with her. She hit white men and lived to tell the tale! Another character who was a great horseman was **Isom Dart** traveled throughout the Southwest and could break any horse brought to him. One of the richest men from 1870-1890 was **Henry O. Wagoner.** He owned hotels in Colorado and Nevada and one called Ford's Inter-Ocean Hotel. He used the name Ford to distance the hotel ownership from himself because of prejudice against blacks.

"There are towns out West that have always been 100% black. Some wagon trains were integrated but towns were not. By the way, did you know that all cowboys were black? The 'boy' part gives this away, being a remnant of the plantation days. Hollywood introduced the concept of white cowboys. Whites were cowpunchers or cattlemen, not cowboys. Only blacks were cow**boys.** Of all the cowpunchers, 30% were black.

"And that's the Story of the Buffalo Soldiers! This is HIStory, history from our point of view."

Program Schedule 2002

All programs are on the third Sunday of the month, from 2-4, and are free and open to the public. Light refreshments are often served. Members receive a post card each month with more details and maps of how to reach the meetings.

SUNDAY • MARCH 24, 2002 • 2 PM

(note this is NOT the third Sunday)

Tammy Szatkowski will give us a tour of the **Sindecuse Dental Museum**, a fascinating and overlooked museum in the heart of the U-M Campus. See collections of old toothpaste tins, tooth brushes, false teeth and dentists' offices, much from the collection of **Dr. Ron** and **Maggie Berris.** The museum is in the lower level of the W.K. Kellogg Institute (the old dental school) at the corner of Fletcher and North University.

SUNDAY • APRIL 21, 2002 • 2 PM

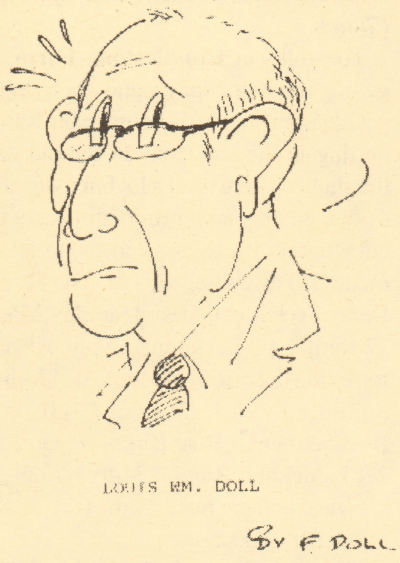
Rachel Szymanski will speak on **Katherine Dexter McCormick,** the granddaughter of Samuel Dexter and founder of the **Village of Dexter**. She is an 11th grade student at Dexter High School and won a prize for this project. Katherine McCormick was active in the women's suffrage movement and birth control movement led by Margaret Sanger. She also hired architect Prof. Emil Lorch to restore her grandfather's home, **Gordon Hall**, and later donated it to the University of Michigan. It was recently designated a county historic landmark and will be sold by the University. St. Joseph Catholic church, 3450 Dover, Dexter.

WEDNESDAY • MAY 15, 2002 6 PM

Annual Meeting and **Potluck** will be held in **Ypsilanti** at the **Ladies Literary Club.**

BY LOUIS WM. DOLL

The Old Ladies Home Association



Louis Doll self-portrait, 1986.

As we reported in an earlier issue, Louis Wm. Doll died in Bay City in October at the age of 90. Doll was a longtime supporter of the WCHS and donated many family items, including a doll dubbed "Miss Emily," which relate to the Doll, Staffan and Beissel families of Ann Arbor and Chelsea. Doll, a trained historian, kept an enthusiasm for local history alive despite his 50-year residency in Bay City. He penned three books on the beloved realm of his youth, which included a history of St. Thomas Parish, a history of the newspapers of Washtenaw County, and a biography of Chelsea's most colorful citizen, Frank Porter Glazier. None of these accomplishments was enough to warrant a story in the ***Ann Arbor News,*** *however! So Louisa Pieper, Grace Shackman, Pauline Walters, and myself paid to have his obituary run in the paper.*

Doll submitted many manuscripts to me during a correspondence we maintained for over ten years. Here is just one, to honor his memory and that of Doris Anna Bach, another benefactor who also died last year and is a descendant of Anna Botsford Bach.

"When my family bought the house at 411 N. State St. in Ann Arbor and moved there from Chelsea on July 5, 1922, we found that the big house next door on the north [419 N. State] was the Anna Botsford Bach (pronounced Baw) Home for Old Ladies.

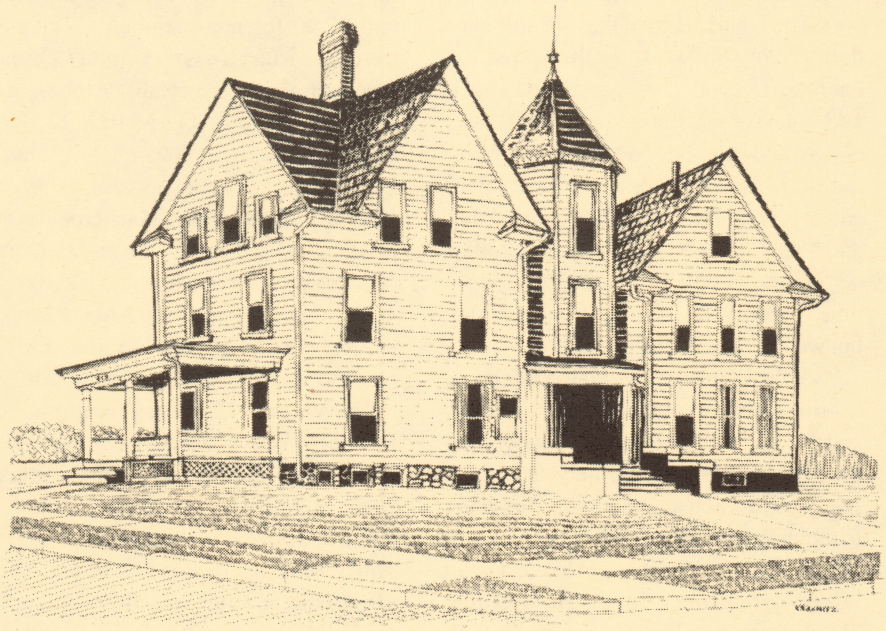
"The Old Ladies Home Association was started sometime before 1909, for in that year the Association purchased the large house at 403 N. State St. on the northwest corner of State and Lawrence [one block south]. After they left it in 1919, it was made into apartments. I owned it from 1950 until 1979.

"In 1919 they purchased the property at 419 N. State on the SW corner of State and Kingsley Streets, the original St. Joseph's Mercy Hospital, and moved there. In 1922 there were about 18 elderly women living there. A few were bedridden, a few rarely left their rooms, and the rest were very active. They soon stopped to talk to me, age eleven, and my two younger brothers, ages nine and six. I ran errands for them once in a while.

"On the south side of the big house was a story and a half rectangular frame building on the spot now covered by the garages. This housed on the first floor the boiler for heating the main building. Above this was an apartment for the boiler operator, care-taker, and janitor, all jobs vested in one person—Mr. Jack Tann, a mulatto, who lived there with his wife. He was a friendly, cheerful and very useful man.

"I remember one Christmas when the Phoebe Beal Circle of the King's Daughters presented each of the residents with a beautiful Jerusalem cherry plant. A few days after Christmas, one of the residents came over and gave us her plant. They were apparently not very popular, for in the next few days, one by one came over to give us a plant until we had seven or eight!

"I understood that a board of twenty Ann Arbor women governed the home. They decided to enlarge the home by building an addition. The coal for the boilers came in over a driveway on the west side of the house, while the entrance was on Kingsley St. They decided to build the addition over the driveway. Soon, big trucks were coming down our driveway, turning into our back yard, unloading on their property, and then backing out our drive. It was a dangerous situation, as my brothers and I were accustomed to playing



419 N. State Street, drawing by Milt Kemnitz in *Ann Arbor Now and Then*, 1972.

with our friends in the back yard. My mother came out on one occasion—my father was working—and told the driver that it was our drive and that they couldn't use it.

"One of the board members was Agnes Finnell, an Ann Arbor real estate dealer. Her brother Edward married my father's sister, Mary Doll and so was well known to my family. Agnes came to the door one day and in a nasty tone of voice informed my mother that they had the right to use the driveway and that we couldn't stop them. So we got the abstract and found that Miss Morse, the builder of both houses, had granted 419 the right to use the 411 driveway until either house was sold. As she had sold both long before, the right had expired.

"So, we waited to see what would happen next. Another board member called and informed us that the lot line ran down the middle of our driveway and that would give them enough room to continue using it. My parents and Mr. and Mrs. Litteer who owned the property adjoining the Bach Home on the west on Kingsley, and who were also concerned about the truck drivers, offered to go shares in having the lots surveyed. This was promptly rejected by the board—they knew where the lot line was. So the Litteers and my parents hired one of the best local surveyors to mark the line. We put up a pipe fence on the line that was exactly where we knew it was. The board decided that our surveyor didn't know his work, so they hired the county surveyor. They got a good shock and a lesson in manners when it was discovered that they lost about a foot on our side and half a foot on the west side. I will never forget the hearty laugh my mother and Mrs. Litteer had when they met after getting the news. The Litteers put up a pipe fence on the county surveyor's line, but we left ours in place.

"So, the home was without a driveway to bring in the rest of the building materials and the coal for the boiler. One of the board members came very politely to us and asked permission to use our drive until the addition was completed. My parents gave permission provided that the drivers would be very careful not to hit us. This building blunder may have been the reason for their search for a new building, but in any case, they purchased Dr. McKenzie's mansion in 1927 [1422 W. Liberty which is the Anna Botsford Bach Home today]. The women who were mobile were bitterly disappointed because they could no longer walk to the campus for lectures and concerts. They missed the liveliness of the busy corner as well, and watching the scores of students on their way to and from class.

"Not long before they moved, the boiler house caught fire and was badly burned. 419 was sold and made into apartments, and a new central heating system was put in. The old boiler house was taken down and garages and a driveway replaced it on the State St. side, taking up most of the former lawn. At one time the famous Mrs. Rosa Luick owned it."

Around The Town

The Kempf House is presenting another exciting group of noon lectures beginning March 6th. All lectures are held at noon at the house located at 312 S. Division. Parking is available at the public lot for the library. You are encouraged to bring your lunch, but you must eat in the dining room only. The entry fee is $1.00 for members and $2.00 for non-members. The first lecture on **March 6 is** by **Donna Lehman** who is an archives specialist at the ***Gerald R. Ford Library***. On **March 13, Ken Scheffel**, the Field Rep of the Bentley Library, will talk about his work there. On **March 30, Dr. Howard Markel** of the UM Medical School will speak on ***Dr. David M. Cowie***, who ran a hospital for over 40 years in the house just south of the Kempf House. Cowie is world famous for his promotion of the use of iodine in salt.

On **March 27, Mary Branch**, the founder of ***Willow Building Co.***, will speak on how her company has helped restore some of Ann Arbor's older houses. On **April 3, Tom Dodd** will speak on ***"Depot Town Tales of Ypsilanti"*** and on **April 10, Burnette Staebler** will speak on her life in Ann Arbor since 1928 and the Staebler family. **Sgt. Michael Logghe** will talk on April 17 on ***"True Crimes in the History of the Ann Arbor Police Department"*** and the final lecture will be on **April 24** by **Ronald Harris** of the Old Westside ***German Methodist Episcopal Church.***

The folks at **Cobblestone Farm** are getting ready for spring and are trying to get ideas on how to discourage birds from nesting in the shutters. In the old days the shutters were used a lot but today they don't get closed much and are too attractive to birds. Any ideas on a kind method of discouragement? The **Family Dance Series** continues on **Sunday, March 17** from 2-4:30. And mark your calendar for **Friday, June 7,** when AAPS Middle Schoolers will hold a **Civil War Reenactment** in Buhr Park. The farm is at **2781 Packard Road, 734-994-2928** and is owned and operated by the City of Ann Arbor Parks Department.

Carol Mull, our speaker in November (see the February 2002 issue of *Impressions*), has been appointed by Governor Engler to the Michigan Freedom Trail Commission. Congratulations are in order!

We'd also like to mention that our former Corresponding Secretary, **Harriet Wuerth Birch,** was featured in the January 2002 issue of the ***Old West Side News,*** which ran a story about her grandfather **David Allmendinger** and his house at 719 W. Washington. This property once had one of the largest burr oaks around and was thought to be 550 years old. It was a sad day when it had to come down in 1909, and to assuage his sorrow David Allmendinger saved wood from the tree and made tables for each of his 13 children. Some of these tables and other Allmendinger items have been displayed at our Museum in the past!

Anyone wanting to do genealogy work at the **LDS Library** should know that is now at **Huron Towers** in the B Building that is for about six months while an elevator is installed in the Hill Street building. We'll keep you posted. Huron Towers is at 2200 Fuller Ct. across from the VA Hospital.

The **UM Detroit Observatory** on **Tuesday, March 12** at 3 PM will host **W.**

Andrew Achenbaum speaking on *"Aging in 19th Century America: The Elderly before the Age of Entitlement."* The final lecture this term will be by **David Scobey** on **Tuesday, April 9** at **3 PM**. He will speak on *"Impressions of the Nation: Print Technologies, Victorian Culture, and American Nation Building."* Open houses will be held at the newly restored 1854 Observatory on **Tuesdays, March 19** and **April 23** from 11 –2 and **Wednesdays, March 6** and **April 10** from 2-5. A $5.00 donation is suggested and UM students enter free. Call 734-763-2230 for information and group rates.

Like diners? The Friends of the **American Diner Museum** have established an e-mail group to announce upcoming regional Historic Diner Lectures and Tours. To find out more, e-mail **HistoricDinerTours@yahoo.com.**

Around The County

Saline is once again in the news! On **Saturday, February 23** Saline officials unveiled a road sign dedicating **US-12** in Saline as a **State Heritage Route**. This is the first stretch of US-12 to get the designation, according to the Program manager, Pete Hansen. To qualify, the city had to show how it intends to preserve historical sites along the road and blend them with new development. The city will also use the designation to promote the corridor as a tourist destination. Since several historic sites and buildings line the road in Saline, the city is now eligible for grants to restore and maintain its historic buildings.

The Sauk Trail Heritage Route/US-12 Committee exists to promote public awareness of this first road to Chicago. First known as the Sauk Trail, then as the Chicago Road, and finally as US-12, the corridor runs from Detroit through Wayne, Washtenaw, Lenawee, Hillsdale, Branch, St. Joseph, Cass and Berrien counties to Chicago. It includes some of the state's earliest settlements at Three Oaks, Galien, Niles, White Pigeon, Sturgis, Coldwater, Allen and Moscow, Saline, Ypsilanti and Inkster (among others). Eventually, the entire Trail will be designated and showcase the surviving inns, towers, and former coach stops of early Michigan. For more information, contact the Committee at **517-467-4414 (Walker Tavern Visitor Center)** or visit their website at **www.IrishHills.com.**

Speaking of Saline, the **SAHS (Saline Area Historical Society)** has several more programs this year. All programs are at the depot at 7:30 and light refreshments are served. On **Wednesday, March 20 Robert Gibson Ypsilanti** will speak on *bottle collecting*. Bring your bottles! On **Wednesday, April 17 Cathy Andrews** will discuss *"The Home Front during World War II."* This will be about victory gardens, ration stamps, recycling of grease and other similar types of home front activities.

The **Rentschler Farm** will re-open **Saturday, May 11 at 11.** If you like to really plan ahead, you might note that **Harvest Time** at the Rentschler Farm will be **Saturday, October 5.** For more information, call **734-429-9621** or **734-769-2219.**

The **Saline Exhibit** at our **Museum on Main Street** has been a big success. There was a nice article in the *Ann Arbor News* and a great turnout (over 35 people) at the Open House February 10. Many new visitors were welcomed to the Museum. The exhibit will remain up until the end of March. Thanks to all who helped out, including **Wayne Clements, Agnes Dikeman, Mary Lirones, Bob Harrison Brian Girbach.**

The Ypsilanti Archives have a new home! In February of this year, the **Ypsilanti Historical Society** opened a new facility to provide better access to the community's past. The Archives are now housed on first floor of the carriage house behind the **Ypsilanti Historic Museum** at 220 N. Huron St. The 600 square foot area provides more space for reading Ypsilanti newspapers and historic documents and allows for longer operating hours, according to **William Edmunds** the museum director. The archives are open from 9-noon Monday-Friday. The Society will be renting the space from the city, and the museum is also rented by the city to the society. Efforts to purchase both buildings in 2000 have been postponed until more funds can be raised. Society President **Joan Carpenter** noted that they can now renovate the museum to its original look and display items that have been in the basement for years. The museum is open 8 AM-noon Monday-Wednesday, 9AM-noon Thursday and Friday, and 2-4 PM Saturday and Sunday. For more information call **734-482-4990.**

The Genealogical Society of Washtenaw County lecture for this month will be on **Sunday, March 24** by **Marilyn Hebner,** President of the Michigan Genealogical Council and her daughter **Diane Hebner**. They will lecture on genealogical research in the **Thumb Area of Michigan**. The class will be given by **Carolyn Griffin** on **Civil War Military Research**. All talks are at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital, 5205 Elliot Drive and begin at 1:30. Use Parking lot P. Their website address is **www.hvcn.org/info/gswc/.**

Marnie Paulus, staff for the **Washtenaw County Historic District Commission,** announced the formation of a new Historic District Study Committee. It is to research and nominate **2426 Whitmore Lake Road** in Ann Arbor Township, the former **MacMahon farm** built in 1867, for historic designation. The Members of the study committee are **Grace Shackman, Janis Bobrin, Gene Ragland, Tom Nicely** and **Susan Wineberg.**

A public hearing was held on February 21 regarding the designation of the **William Jane McCormick Farm** at **9105 West Ann Arbor Road** in **Superior Township**. A Preliminary Report was released December 2001 and sent to the State Historic Preservation Office for comments. With those comments, and those expressed by the public and the committee at the public hearing, a Final Report will be drafted and submitted to the County Board of Commissioners for approval. The members of this study committee are **Louisa Pieper, Grace Shackman, Scott Diels, Glenn Miller, Jeanine Miller, Marshall McLennan, Nancy Snyder, Jane Van Bolt, Kay Williams Susan Wineberg.**

Your Museum

Continued from page 1.

The most pressing needs now are storage shelving for collections to be housed at the museum. **Judy Chrisman,** who recently retired from her day job, will be getting a state-of-the- art system as well as a digital camera to document all our items for inventory and insurance purposes. Judy reports the accession of a wonderful **antique clothes rack** from **Marion Marzolf.** This will be very handy for displaying items and we are very grateful to Marion.

Other pressing needs are being addressed by architect **Ilene Tyler** and builder **Joe Majorana**, who have met with **Pauline Walters** to discuss insulating the attic and shoring up the second floor to allow for the storage of heavy filing cabinets. They are also dealing with our door and hardware problems and seem to have found a simple solution. Hooray!

Website Underway

Ina Hanel attended the NEW Center's session on introductory web page design using Dreamweaver last November. She is very grateful to the folks there for the scholarship she received for their **Nonprofit Enterprise at Work's** fall 2001 "Managing for Nonprofit Excellence Workshop." These workshops are funded by MACAA, the Junior League of Ann Arbor, the City of Ann Arbor, and Washtenaw County. The purpose of NEW is to "enhance the quality of life in Washtenaw County by promoting leadership development, management excellence, and effective service delivery within the nonprofit sector." For more information contact **Andrea Grover** at **agrover@new.org** or call **734-998-0160.**

Program Coordinator Needed

We are still greatly in need of someone to plan our programs for next year. We know it is hard to replace Louisa Pieper but someone out there must love finding interesting programs as much as she does. If that person is you, please contact President Pauline Walters at 734-**662-9092,** who suggests this would be ideal for a team to tackle.

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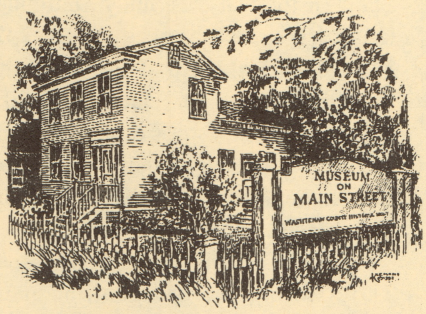

WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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